

10 September 1968

Logistic Developments in the Panhandle of North Vietnam, 2-8 September, 1968Activities South of the 19th ParallelArmed Reconnaissance SortiesThis Week (2-8 September)

297 sorties per day

66 percent in Route Package I

19 percent in Route Package II

15 percent in Route Package III
(below 19° North)Last Week (26 Aug - 1 Sep)

436 sorties per day

57 percent in Route Package I

30 percent in Route Package II

13 percent in Route Package III
(below 19° North)For the Period 1 Apr - 8 Sep

358 sorties per day

57 percent in Route Package I

27 percent in Route Package II

16 percent in Route Package III **
(below 19° North)For the Period 1 Jan - 8 Sep

273 sorties per day

60 percent in Route Package I

24 percent in Route Package II

16 percent in Route Package III

Weather ***

Above 19° North: Good weather briefly centered over this area at

* The rate of attack listed for 2-8 September may be as much as five percent below the actual rate because some reports from operating units in Southeast Asia were not available at the time of publication.

** Beginning 1 April nearly all sorties have been flown south of the 19th Parallel.

*** Good weather - 10,000 feet or more ceiling, and five miles or more visibility.

Fair weather - 5-10 thousand feet ceiling, and five miles or more visibility.

Poor weather - Less than 5,000 feet ceiling, and/or five miles or less visibility.

USAF and DIA review(s) completed.

the beginning of the period, but for the balance of the week poor weather prevailed. Tropical storm "WINDY" located off the northern coast of North Vietnam on 8 September, moved inland over the Haiphong area on the 9th and should create some flood-associated problems in the low lying portions.

Below 19° North: Generally poor weather prevailed throughout the week. Tropical storm "BESS" which moved over much of the Panhandle during the latter part of the week caused temporary widespread flooding in Route Packages 1 and 2. The daily rainfall in this area from the 4th through 6 September averaged 12-16 inches.

Highways

	<u>Preliminary Pilot Reports on Trucks *</u>		
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (2-8 Sep)	299	77	34
Last Week (26 Aug - 1 Sep)	681	199	74
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	690	126	77
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	539	92	66

Remarks:

Extremely poor weather conditions which persisted throughout most of the week, greatly hampered and restricted air operations over the Panhandle, and was the principal cause for the substantial drop in the number of truck sightings and truck losses (see table above). Pilots

* These are preliminary data, included to indicate trends in activity. Final data on trucks sighted, destroyed and damaged may be appreciably greater, as the above compilations are based on incomplete reporting.

reported on 6 September that all coastal routes and portions of inland Routes 82, 101, and 137 were impassable due to flooding. Weather did not permit any visual reconnaissance of the upper portions of Route 101 or Route 15 but similar temporary flooding conditions would be expected in these areas also. Limited photography [] of the coastal areas south of Ha Tinh also show extensive flooding of the lowland areas.

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The only significantly large concentration of trucks sighted by pilots this week was a group of 50 vehicles detected during the night of 7 September on Route 15 several miles south of junction 7 and 15. At least six trucks were reported destroyed and four trucks damaged as a result of attacks against this concentration.

Roadwatch Teams

	Total Trucks Counted for Period		
	Latest Period	Previous Period	Weekly Average 1968
Route 15 [] north of Mu Gia Pass)	(1-5 Sep) 22S; 42N	(23-31 Aug) 58S; 83N	161S; 140N
Route 912	(1-6 Sep) 36S; 35N	(23-31 Aug) 32S; 45N	N.A

Remarks:

The team on Route 15 reported that it was unable to observe the road for several hours each day during the latest period because of heavy rain. During these periods it did not report hearing any trucks moving, but the figures it did report may represent the minimum numbers of trucks actually moving during the entire reporting period.

The team on Route 912 []

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may not be all the traffic passing over the road near its position.

Railroads

	<u>Preliminary Pilot Reports on Railroad Cars</u>		
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (2-8 Sep)	2	0	1
Last Week (26 Aug - 1 Sep)	0	0	0
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	14	1	2
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	27	2	5

Remarks:

Attacks against the railroad network south of 19° N continued this week although at a reduced level due to the poor weather. Previous damage inflicted on the Hanoi - Vinh line continues to prevent through rail service to Vinh, but the North Vietnamese continue to shuttle goods between interdicted portions of the rail line.

Waterways

	<u>Preliminary Pilot Reports on Watercraft</u>		
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (2-8 Sep)	336	45	73
Last Week (26 Aug - 1 Sep)	587	111	95
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	434	67	77
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	332	51	64

Remarks:

The generally poor weather that prevailed below 19° N latitude

hampered air operations and was largely responsible for the low number of watercraft sighted over the past seven days.

Pilots reported substantial flooding along the Nguon Noy, Song Troc and Song Giang rivers in Route Package 1. However, the damage caused by flooding to the numerous transshipment and storage areas located along these key waterways is likely to be only temporary.

Logistic Activity Between the 19th and 20th Parallels

Rail:

Recent photography of portions of the rail system south of Thanh Hoa to the southern rail terminus point just south of the sanctuary boundary of the 19th Parallel, indicates that the line is continuing to be extensively used for shuttling supplies from Thanh Hoa to points close to the areas under attack. Coverage [] of the Qui Vinh Railroad Yard and Transshipment area located about 20 miles north of the 19th Parallel shows evidence that this area is being used for logistic activity. Five small flatcars (four are loaded with unidentified supplies) were observed standing on a siding adjacent to a heavily used truck transshipment point. A short distance away, a truck locomotive used for pulling the small two axle cars was sighted parked on another rail siding. On the main line, just south of the above transshipment point a train consisting of two truck locomotives and three empty flatcars was also noted. Photography in prior months indicated that this yard and transshipment area were not in use.

The Tu My rail spurs located immediately above the 19th Parallel have become a part of a large transshipment and storage complex that functions

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in part as the comparison of photography [] showed a moderate buildup in rail stock on the northernmost spur and also an increase in supplies stacked alongside the spur. Tu My is located only one mile from the bombing zone and offers a convenient transshipment and storage point within the sanctuary area from which supplies can be safely and quickly moved into regions that remain under air attack.

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Highways:

Drone photography [] revealed evidence that the North Vietnamese are continuing to replenish and/or re-deploy antiaircraft missile defense units in the Panhandle. Six semi-trailer flatbed trucks carrying probable SA-2 missile cannisters, a camouflaged truck towing a van-trailer, a possible oxidizer truck and several other vehicles were detected heading south along Route 1A just south of the Qui Vinh transshipment area. A few miles farther south along 1A, four other empty SA-2 missile transporters together with several POL and cargo type trucks were spotted also heading south.

Photos from another drone mission [] revealed a concentration of at least 11 POL trucks hidden in the village of Vinh Lai which is located on Route 1A about five miles north of the 19th Parallel. These vehicles, unlike most of the POL type trucks observed in operation within the Panhandle, are true POL tank trucks and not cargo trucks fitted with a fabricated POL tank. These tank trucks are probably kept hidden within the sanctuary area during the day, but are used during the night to resupply the extensive dispersed POL storage areas south of the 19th Parallel.

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